

Schools will benefit from sabbatical leave

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I am on a sabbatical leave from Spring Street School for the 2001-2002 school year. The purpose of the leave is to complete my doctorate in psychology, which requires a full year of clinical internship at an approved training site. For my training year, I have been very fortunate to receive an appointment at The University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester.

To date, the training experiences at UMass Medical have been outstanding. I am involved with children and adults in both inpatient and outpatient settings. I also take part in weekly didactic seminars in neuropsychology, psychopharmacology and behavior medicine. However, being someone who is child focused, my favorite rotation is in the Pediatric Psychology Department. Here I am learning how to conduct cognitive behavioral therapy with children who have a wide variety of medical and psychiatric disorders. In addition, while in this rotation, I have had the unique experience of conducting therapy with children on the Pediatric Oncology Unit of UMass. With these children I am learning how to use hypnosis and guided visual imagery to reduce the anxiety and pain that these children often experience. These special experiences with children are being supervised by Dr. Martin Young, a well known pediatric psychologist at UMass and highly respected member of the Shrewsbury community.

As this year passes I am envisioning appropriate ways to integrate these cutting edge therapies and treatments into school-based practice with children and families. Moreover, I am excited about the possibility of sharing what I have gained with regular and special education staff through a variety of formats.

I would like to thank the Shrewsbury School Administration and School Committee for granting me this special privilege to train at UMass Medical this year. I am especially looking forward to returning to share this knowledge and these special techniques with the children, staff, and community that have already taught me so much about people.



PHOTO BY AMY O'LEARY

Tim Connors

High school "FF&E": what is it?

PATRICK COLLINS
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With the new high school project underway some of you may have heard the term "FF&E" bantered about. This is an acronym for furniture, fixtures, and equipment. The process of equipping the new facility with FF&E is a relatively complex web of decisions that will impact school operations for decades to come.

The process began over two years ago as part of the design process with the high school administration and department directors providing input as to what would be needed in the new high school and what could be taken from the existing school. Lists of equipment were priced, reviewed, revised, and trimmed along the way. The final budget figure agreed upon was \$5.2M.

In April 2001 the equipping process entered the next level of development with the formation of a management team for the procurement of all the FF&E. This group consists of Dan Gutekanst, Principal, Ken Largess, Assistant Principal, Bob Cornacchioli, Director of Technology, and myself. (Somewhere along the way we dubbed ourselves the "FAT Team", a not-so-politically correct nickname standing for "Furniture And Technology Team"- not a name attributable to anyone's girth!) We meet on a weekly basis to discuss all of the various aspects of procuring the necessary classroom, administrative, and site equipment.

Our procurement process is strictly regulated by the Uniform Procurement Act, Chapter 30B, of



PHOTO BY AMY O'LEARY

This interior photo shows the 'Main Street' corridor which is central to the whole High School.

the Massachusetts General Laws. This insures that we (and the entire public sector) engage in both sound business practice and conduct competitive bidding for the procurement of all the goods required to outfit the building. In many cases, the State has set up purchasing contracts from which municipalities and school departments can purchase equipment at pre-negotiated prices. For example, state contracts we will be using include the R.H.Lord Company to source classroom and media center furniture; the W.B. Mason Company for administrative furniture; and Apple Computer Company for a significant portion of technology products. All these vendors have state contracts and provide not only the goods but also computer assisted design (CAD) services, installation, and trash

removal.

Other considerations of the FF&E process include weight room machines, vending machines and payphones, maintenance equipment, science lab equipment, food service smallwares, music, art, and physical education equipment. Implicit in this process is the consideration for taking some of the useful equipment from the existing high school and moving it to the new facility or transferring it to another school.

The overall goal of the FAT Team is to insure that teachers have the equipment they need prior to school opening so that teaching can begin on the first day of school and we experience a seamless transition from the old high school to the new one. Now, next time you hear "FF&E" you know what it's all about!

Kindergarten registration information

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The Shrewsbury Public Schools offers half and full day kindergarten programs for students turning five before August 31, 2002. The School Department recently sent registration information to families with children who may be eligible to enroll. The purpose of the mailing is to gather up-to-date information about parents' plans so that the district can plan appropriately. Final registration will be completed in the spring.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools offers two options, half-day and full day programming. The full-day program is popular with many families, unfortunately the district only has classroom space for two sections. As a result families must participate in a lottery for available seats. This year's lottery will be held on February 4, 2002 and pre-registration is required. If you have not received a registration form in the November mailing, you may call Diane Abbott, Registrar at (508) 841-8320.

The full-day kindergarten is an integrated program, providing services for eligible special education students and typically developing peers. Special education eligibility is determined through the individualized educational plan process which often begin during the preschool years. The district supports the full-day program and parents pay a half-day tuition. The cur-

rent rate for tuition is \$1980, with a possible increase for next year. Tuition assistance is available for families who qualify.

Early childhood education provides an important foundation for young students as they begin school. Shrewsbury Public Schools maintains the Early Childhood Center at Beal School, which serves students in grades kindergarten and one. As the school district population continues to grow the kindergarten program has grown as well. At this time the district leases space at Beal West (behind the Post Office) where it holds four half-day sessions. The staff and students at Beal West are closely connected to the program at Beal School, where services such as media, physical education and music are provided. Additionally, the district currently provides some half-day kindergarten classes at Spring Street School. The need to keep kindergarten classes at Spring Street will be determined during the registration process in the spring.

The early childhood curriculum is challenging, yet child-centered and developmentally appropriate. All content areas are addressed through integrated thematic teaching with a focus on literacy. This year the kindergarten teachers are involved in professional development incorporating the writing process into their daily teaching. Social and emotional objectives are met through the use of the Responsive Classroom and morning meeting. Teachers and students

build community within the classroom where there is respect and support for individual learning needs. Parents are an integral part of the early childhood program. The Beal Early Childhood Center is in the process of accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The following dates and activities provide an overview of the registration and screening process for kindergarten in the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

- **December 3, 2001**
School Department sends initial mailing to eligible families
- **January 18, 2002**
Families return basic enrollment intentions
- **February 4, 2002**
Full-day lottery broadcast on Channel 34
- **February 13, 2002**
Final registration is completed with assignment to school and morning or afternoon sessions
- **March 19, 2002**
Kindergarten readiness workshop at Beal School of all kindergarten families
- **June 10, 2002**
Kindergarten Open House at each school site
- **August 15, 2002**
(approximate date) Kindergarten screening appointments and bus assignments will be mailed to parents